

Village Street Info

There seems to be some misinformation floating around the community concerning the program to improve the street surfaces in the village. Let me take this opportunity to set the record straight on this matter.

Any revenue generated by the street tax, that was approved by the village voters, must only be used on the repair and improvement of the village streets. It cannot be redirected to any other projects or budget items.

The recent resurfacing of the basketball court at Durham Park and the parking lot at the village office was not, I repeat, was not, paid out of funds generated by the street millage. The money for that project came from revenue generated by license fees (local and state) for the marijuana businesses that currently are within the village limits.

This summer's street project is scheduled to be the completion of the 'Elm Street Loop'. This includes Railroad St from Main to Elm, the full length of Elm St, and Clinton St from Elm to Main. Because 80% of the project funding comes from the State of Michigan, scheduling of the work as well as inspection requirements are set by the State. It's a present-day application of the old adage, "He who pays the piper, calls the tune." We had hoped that the work would have started early this summer. However, the State pushed the start date to late August or September. Just within the past few days, however, the village has received word from our engineer that the actual work may not take place until the spring of 2024. Again, these dates are set by the State of Michigan, not locally. The funding for this major project has already been set aside and requires none of the street tax revenue.

So, why aren't we spending the incoming street tax this year to fix more streets? That's a reasonable question to ask. The answer is that one year's worth of revenue does not generate enough money to be very cost effective. By combining two years' worth of revenue, we are able to be more efficient with the money available. Rather than paying transportation, set-up fees and other associated costs for each single year, we can pay those fees once and therefore, have more to spend on actual street improvement.

Hopefully, this information sets the record straight for those who were confused or just didn't know how this works. If you still have questions that need further explanation, please feel free to call the village office at 517-767-4204.

Tony Bowling
Village President